Learning Credits System

Implementation Guide | From Compliance to Competency

A practical, configurable architecture for internal employee learning, workplace application and knowledge transfer.

1. Strategic intent

The LCS is an internal organizational mechanism for recognizing continuous development. It is designed to move beyond uncurated mandatory hours toward role-relevant capability pathways and evidence of learning transfer. It does not issue externally recognized continuing education units or professional recertification credits.

Outcomes to pursue

More relevant learning choices; better visibility into skill development; greater cross-functional knowledge sharing; stronger linkage between learning and work; more equitable access to development.

2. Operating principles

Keep the rules simple; permit multiple learning formats; validate activity proportionately; make learning accessible; emphasize demonstrated application; review outcomes rather than rewarding volume alone.

3. Roles and accountability

Role	Accountability
Executive sponsor	Approve capability priorities, pilot scope, resourcing and policy
Learning Architects	Represent functions; curate and periodically refresh learning paths
People / L&D	Own taxonomy, platform configuration, support, reporting and audit
Managers / subject experts	Confirm relevance and verify applied work or contributions
Employees	Choose pathways, document learning and demonstrate application

4. Credit architecture

The original concept uses Consume, Attend and Give. This enhanced version adds Apply to recognize transfer of learning into actual work. The values below are recommended pilot settings, not universal standards.

Category	Illustrative rule	Evidence
Consume	1 credit per verified learning hour; reading converted to time with reflection	Completion record or reflection
Attend	1 credit per attended hour; cap events at 8 credits per day	Registration / attendance confirmation
Apply	2–4 credits for a documented use case, calibrated for complexity	Work artifact and manager/SME validation
Give	2–8 credits for mentoring, facilitation, reusable materials or presentation	Agenda, materials and audience / recipient confirmation

Illustrative scoring examples

A two-hour self-paced course: 2 Consume credits. A three-hour workshop: 3 Attend credits. A documented process redesign applying a new method: 4 Apply credits after validation. A reusable internal learning session: 4 Give credits, subject to review.

Controls and anti-gaming rules

Do not double-count the same time as both Consume and Attend. A learning event may generate additional Apply credits only for separately evidenced work. Define reasonable category caps, require relevance to role or approved development plan, and sample submissions for quality. Permit appeals and accommodations.

5. Tiered expectations

Level	Pilot annual target	Design note
Individual contributor	12	Emphasize core functional skills and role progression
Manager / senior manager	24	Add coaching, leadership and team capability
Director / executive	40	Add strategy, external insight and knowledge transfer

Targets should be calibrated during pilot to avoid disadvantaging shift workers, part-time employees, caregivers, employees with disabilities or roles with limited training access.

6. Role-based pathways

Each function should maintain a concise pathway: foundational capabilities, role-specific skills, elective growth topics and opportunities to apply or teach. Learning Architects should curate resources rather than direct employees to large unfiltered catalogs.

Example: manager pathway

Stage	Illustrative activity	Validation
Learn	Complete coaching and feedback modules	Course record and reflection
Practice	Run a structured coaching conversation	Manager confirmation
Apply	Use the approach over a team cycle	Brief outcome note
Share	Facilitate a peer learning exchange	Agenda and attendance

7. Workflow and data architecture

Step 1: Employee selects an approved activity or requests approval. Step 2: Learning activity is recorded in LMS or a lightweight register. Step 3: Evidence is attached or linked. Step 4: Automated rules score routine activity; designated reviewers approve Apply/Give. Step 5: Dashboard aggregates credits, pathway progress and evidence quality. Step 6: Quarterly review refreshes pathways and tests whether capabilities are improving.

Minimum data fields

Employee identifier; function and role tier; activity title; learning category; date; duration; credit request; approved credits; skill tag; evidence link; reviewer; approval status; privacy/retention designation.

Privacy and accessibility

Collect only the minimum data required, restrict reviewer access, avoid exposing sensitive learning reflections in public leaderboards, and offer equivalent routes for employees with differing access needs.

8. Pilot and launch roadmap

Timing	Activities	Exit criterion
Months 1–2	Sponsor charter; select Learning Architects; agree taxonomy, rules and success measures	Pilot policy approved
Months 3–4	Build pathways; configure tracking; train reviewers; recruit representative cohorts	Ready for controlled pilot
Month 5	Run pilot; audit credit decisions; collect employee feedback; assess access and quality	Adjust rules and targets
Month 6	Approve phased rollout; publish guidance; begin quarterly governance	Go/no-go decision

9. Evaluation scorecard

Indicator	What it tells us
Participation by role / function	Whether learning access is equitable
Completion of relevant pathways	Whether development is aligned with capability priorities
Verified Apply submissions	Whether learning transfers into work
Give contributions reused by others	Whether knowledge sharing creates reusable assets
Skill proficiency changes	Whether capability is increasing
Operational metrics linked to use cases	Whether specific applications contribute to business outcomes

10. Incentives and recognition

Begin with developmental feedback, visible recognition and protected time. If compensation linkage is considered later, evaluate fairness, labor and legal implications, auditability and unintended incentives. An internal subject matter expert designation should require demonstrated proficiency, not merely twice the credit target.

11. Decisions before implementation

Confirm sponsor, eligible population, pilot functions, annual targets, category caps, evidence standards, system of record, retention policy, review cadence and evaluation criteria.

Attribution and adaptation

Framework developed for discussion by Charles Thompson Consulting. Adaptable for internal employee development. No affiliation with or approval by external credentialing bodies is implied. Values are illustrative and should be tested before adoption.

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